

The Procession of the League:  
Remembering the Wars of Religion in Visual and Literary Satire

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**Abstract** – This article examines the famous series of images known as the Procession of the League in order to explore how memories of the Wars of Religion were formed in the early modern period and with what consequences. Following the Edict of Nantes, the cumulative production of royalist painters, engravers, historians, poets, publishers, and collectors turned one of the strengths and defining features of Catholic League piety—its enormous popular processions—into a target of satire. New discoveries concerning the commissioning, copying, and circulation of these pictures reveal how Catholics and Protestants after the religious wars could be surprisingly united by memory when it served a political purpose. Ultimately this shared memory could not conceal the changing nature of confessional relations in France throughout the seventeenth century when, amid renewed religious controversy, artists reimagined the scene with polemical intent.

Museums throughout France prominently exhibit paintings from a series known as ‘The Procession of the League’. These images commemorate an armed procession through the streets of Paris in May 1590 by a band of nobles, clerics, monks, friars and militiamen—all partisans of the Catholic League—who march in solidarity against Henri de Navarre, heir to the French crown by hereditary descent as Henri IV following the assassination of Henri III on 1 August 1589. Paris at this moment is the crucial battleground in Reformation Europe. Navarre’s armies lay siege to the capital, with faltering financial and military support from Elizabeth I of England and German Protestant princes. Against Navarre, the League fights for a Catholic succession under the leadership of the Guise family alongside the papacy and the Spanish monarchy. Yet all of this action takes place elsewhere, as the picture is dominated not by political leaders but by religious fanatics.

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Figure 1. Musée Carnavalet, Paris, P.622, oil on canvas, 100 x 212cm, acquired 1899. Bridgeman Education.





Figure 2. Musée Carnavalet, Paris, P.262, oil on canvas, 154 x 267cm, acquired 1895. Bridgeman Education.



The best-known versions of these paintings hang in the Musée Carnavalet in Paris. Since the Carnavalet opened as the capital's first municipal museum in 1880, marking a new sense of detachment from the city's past during the upheavals of Hausmannisation, it has displayed an engaging, official view of Paris' prominent role in French history.<sup>2</sup> Its sixteenth-century wing moves from the apparently prosperous early century of banquets and dances to the troubles of the religious wars in its later decades, represented most strikingly by four paintings of the Procession of the League, including two large-scale versions. The museum started to acquire these pictures at auctions and following bequests in the 1890s.<sup>3</sup> The procession leads through the Île de la Cité not far from the cathedral of Notre Dame (Figure 1)—by far the most typical scene—or through the Place de Grève before the Hôtel de Ville (Figure 2). Historians recognise the iconic appeal of these pictures, as emblems of the confessional passions of the Wars of Religion, when they display them prominently as illustrations to studies of this period. Yet outside of brief catalogue entries no curators or historians have analysed these pictures in any detail. Crucial questions remain unanswered. Which particular procession do they even depict? Who painted them, when and for whom? And how have they shaped memories of the civil wars ever since? This article argues that in the years following Henri IV's victory over the Catholic League, the cumulative production of royalist painters, engravers, historians, poets, publishers and collectors turned one of the strengths and defining features of Leaguer piety—its enormous processions—into a target of satire. These paintings do not simply illustrate the troubles of the League. Instead they served to commemorate them for a receptive audience throughout the seventeenth century and beyond.

Major historical narratives in the seventeenth century remembered the troubles of the League as a period characterised by the problem of political rebellion against Henri de

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<sup>2</sup> J.-M. Bruson and C. Leribault (eds.), *Peintures du Musée Carnavalet: catalogue sommaire* (Paris, 1999), 107.

<sup>3</sup> See the list of extant versions in the Appendix.

Navarre. These narratives particularly followed the great historian and *président* in the *Parlement de Paris* Jacques-Auguste de Thou in criticising the apparently misleading and self-serving rhetoric of spiritual crusade proclaimed by the League's polemicists.<sup>4</sup> Prominent contemporary images supported this interpretation. Picture galleries in royal and aristocratic palaces celebrated Henri IV's victories over the League in portraits, mythological representations, and epic history paintings of famous battles.<sup>5</sup> The diarist and collector Pierre de L'Estoile, a *grand audientier* (Hearer) and *secrétaire du roi* (Royal Secretary) in the Chancery attached to the *Parlement*, transformed heaps of ephemeral broadsheets that circulated in Paris in these years into a vigorous scrapbook history of the 'Drolleries of the League' which ridiculed the party through the evidence of its own publications.<sup>6</sup> Since those who had supported the League either cut a deal with Henri IV or went into exile throughout Habsburg Europe, few sympathisers remained in France to create pro-League counter-memories.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, qualified support for the League might be conveyed effectively in visual media when introduced to a select, elite audience. A picture gallery built in Paris in 1598 by Sébastien Zamet, an ex-League financier who supported Henri IV following his defeat of the League in 1594, gave pride of place in the more accessible ground-floor gallery to a portrait of the king, while the rather restricted first-floor gallery displayed portraits of Habsburg monarchs alongside devotional pictures, a selection that conveyed a persistent sympathy for his former clients.<sup>8</sup> Most seventeenth-century interpretations of the League rallied behind a coherent royalist interpretation. Yet the divisions of the League remained a

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<sup>4</sup> P. Benedict, 'Shaping the Memory of the French Wars of Religion. The First Centuries', in *Memory before Modernity: Practices of Memory in Early Modern Europe*, (ed.) E. Kuijpers, J. Müller, J. Pollmann and J. van der Steen (Leiden, 2013), 111–25.

<sup>5</sup> D. van der Linden, 'Painting the Past: How to Remember the French Civil Wars in a Picture Gallery' (unpublished paper).

<sup>6</sup> T. Hamilton, 'Recording the Wars of Religion: The "Drolleries of the League" from Ephemeral Print to Scrapbook History' in L. Corens, K. Peters and A. Walsham (eds.), *The Social History of the Archive: Record Keeping in Early Modern Europe. Past and Present Supplement* (Oxford, 2016).

<sup>7</sup> R. Descimon and J. J. Ruiz Ibáñez, *Les Ligueurs de l'exil: le refuge catholique français après 1594* (Seyssel, 2005).

<sup>8</sup> Van der Linden, 'Painting the Past'.

recent memory which required persistent, collaborative effort to overcome, a task that the images of the Procession of the League accomplished effectively.

Beyond the specific memory of the troubles of the League, this article asks more generally how a topic in collective memory becomes fixed in its formative years. It refuses to consider topics in collective memory in the early modern period as part of a shapeless *milieu de mémoire* that can only be fixed as a *lieu de mémoire* by modern institutions. Such a view caricatures early modern memory culture as lacking a sense of anachronism, unable to distinguish between past and present because of the overwhelming burden of tradition in pre-modern life. It also gives too much agency to governing elites in dictating from above how events should be remembered.<sup>9</sup> Instead, this article explores how multiple actors used a variety of written and visual media to form historical memories of divisive events in the early modern period and with what consequences. Images of the Procession of the League made use of anachronism for specific ends at particular moments in the aftermath of the events concerned through strategies of visual and textual appropriation. Modern museums did not monopolise historical representations of the civil wars but competed in the market for pictures with private collectors, who had determined the success of the images of the Procession of the League long before institutions such as the Musée Carnavalet displayed them as part of an official history. Together, these points demonstrate the importance of political conjunctures in determining how historical events should be commemorated. But rather than understanding the relation of events and image-production as one of top-down ‘propaganda’, this article emphasises the importance of demand-driven image production for diverse audiences. In this case the audiences’ endeavour was the crucial factor in forging a collective memory. The Procession of the League allowed a broad group of royalists to

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<sup>9</sup> P. Nora, ‘Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire’, *Representations*, 26 (1989), 7–24, critiqued in Pollmann and Kuijpers, ‘Introduction. On the Early Modernity of Modern Memory’ in *Memory before Modernity*.

proclaim their allegiance to the French crown as they displayed a key image which fixed the memory of the Wars of Religion in a way that persists in modern historical representations.

## I

The paintings of the 'Procession of the League' are well known but there is no consensus as to which particular procession is depicted in them. When museum and auction catalogues present these paintings they suggest a number of possible processions as their subjects, all of which took place in Paris between 1590 and 1593.<sup>10</sup> Dating the procession is so complicated because the troubles of the League formed part of a great age of spiritual renewal, the starting point of Counter-Reformation piety in France.<sup>11</sup> A wave of white penitential processions swept across northern France in 1583-84, centred on the diocese of Reims and shaped by clerics in towns which took a leading role in the League rebellion a few years later.<sup>12</sup> Processions filled the streets of Paris and the pages of contemporary chronicles following the League's victory in the capital on the Day of the Barricades on 12 May 1588.<sup>13</sup> Throughout the years of League rule in Paris, until the victory of Henri IV and his entry into the capital in March 1594, processions both celebrated the traditional cycle of religious festivals and commemorated particular events in the civil wars, some of which survived into historical calendars following the end of the troubles.<sup>14</sup> Among all of these processions, which one did artists and historians choose to commemorate the troubles of the League?

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<sup>10</sup> See the Appendix.

<sup>11</sup> For an evaluation of these claims see J. Bergin, *The Politics of Religion in Early Modern France* (New Haven and London, 2014), 86–8; J. Bergin, *Church, Society and Religious Change in France, 1580–1730* (New Haven and London, 2009), 8–14.

<sup>12</sup> D. Crouzet, 'Recherches sur les Processions Blanches – 1583–1584', *Histoire, économie et société*, 1 (1982), 511–63.

<sup>13</sup> D. Richet, *De la Réforme à la Révolution: études sur la France moderne* (Paris, 1991), 69–82.

<sup>14</sup> P. Benedict, 'Divided Memories? Historical Calendars, Commemorative Processions and the Recollection of the Wars of Religion During the Ancien Régime', *French History*, 22 (2008), 381–405; Richet, *Réforme*, 77.

It is possible to rule out the vast majority of minor penitential processions which occurred at this time as the paintings depict an extraordinary procession featuring members of many religious orders armed to the hilt. By comparing details in the paintings with near-contemporary textual sources, this section settles the dealers' and museum curators' dilemma by arguing that a procession which took place in Paris on 14 May 1590 served as the basis for this series of paintings collectively titled 'The Procession of the League'. This procession was a major event which remained in collective memory. As the royal historiographer Pierre Victor Palma Cayet wrote about this particular procession, 'we had not seen monks and priests in arms like this since the years 1562 and 1567' at the outbreak of the troubles.<sup>15</sup> The dealers' and curators' confusion about dating this procession derives from later appropriations of the scene, analysed in the next section of this article.

As Henri IV and his army began the siege of Paris in spring 1590, the papal legate Cardinal Cajetan blessed this procession on 14 May which demonstrated the strength and resilience of the armies of the League. The legate (Figure 1b.A) is nevertheless a marginal presence in most of the representations of this scene which focus on the procession itself. Guillaume Rose, the armed bishop of Senlis, leads the procession (Figure 1b.B).<sup>16</sup> Both De Thou and the pro-League reporter and travel writer Filippo Pigafetta mention that Rose carried a crucifix in his left hand and a halberd in his right. This is repeated in the image.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> P. V. Palma Cayet, *Chronologie novenaire, contenant l'histoire de la guerre, sous le regne du tres chrestien roy de France et de Navarre, Henry IIII* (Paris, 1608), i, 360r–1v.

<sup>16</sup> T. Amalou, *Le Lys et la mitre: loyalisme monarchique et pouvoir épiscopal pendant les guerres de religion, 1580–1610* (Paris, 2007), 138–54.

<sup>17</sup> F. Pigafetta, 'Relation du siège de Paris par Henri IV, traduite de l'italien de Filippo Pigafetta', *Mémoires de la société de l'histoire de Paris et de l'Ile de France*, 2 (1876), 50–1; J.-A. de Thou, *Historiarum sui temporis* (London, 1733, first edition to include the troubles of the League 1620), iv, 863–4 trans. *Histoire universelle de Jacques-Auguste de Thou depuis 1543 jusqu'en 1607* ('London', 1734), xi, 160–1.



Figure 1b. Musée Carnavalet, Paris, P.622.



Further back through the procession marched priests representing various Parisian parishes, all bearing the cross of Lorraine, the symbol of the house of Guise. A soldier firing into the air wears a red sash, the symbol of the Spanish monarchy (Figure 1b.C).<sup>18</sup> Then Pigafetta ignores, yet all the royalist accounts highlight, the lame reformed Cistercian Bernard de Montgaillard, known to De Thou and the Parisian diarist and collector Pierre de L'Estoile as 'the little *feuillant*', hobbling excitedly between the rank and file. According to the royalist L'Estoile, Montgaillard was among the most prominent preachers for the League in Paris. He had a reputation for sanctity and a devoted following, such that the women who heard him preach sent him jams.<sup>19</sup> It is difficult to identify him in the paintings among the many Carthusians present (Figure 1b.D). Most of the written accounts do not single out the priests and instead list the religious orders involved in the procession. Pigafetta and L'Estoile mention the Carthusians, the Capuchins and the Cordeliers or Observant Franciscans in the same habits (Figure 1b.E) as well as the Feuillants or reformed Cistercians (Figure 1b.F). De Thou added the Minims, Jacobins or Dominicans and Carmelites who do not feature in the paintings. Perhaps unsurprisingly, given his career defending the liberties of the Gallican Church, De Thou is the only source to mention by name the Jesuit Robert Bellarmine who arrived in the legate's entourage.<sup>20</sup>

Crucially, all of the historical accounts mention the accident which made a mockery of the procession of May 1590. Even the Leaguer Panigarola had to mention that 'because they were not used to carrying guns, one of the processors killed one of the bystanders and injured another'.<sup>21</sup> The killer is a reckless Carthusian who turns his head back towards a

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<sup>18</sup> D. Turrel, *Le Blanc de France: la construction des signes identitaires pendant les guerres de religion, 1562–1629* (Genève, 2005), 54–61.

<sup>19</sup> P. de L'Estoile, *Registre-journal du règne de Henri III*, (eds.) Madeleine Lazard and Gilbert Schrenck (Geneva, 1992–2003), v, 308, vi, 133; Descimon and Ibanez, *Ligueurs*, 42, 136–7, 169, 208, 211, 235, 254, 256–7; B. Diefendorf, 'A Monastery in Revolt: Paris's Feuillants in the Holy League', *Réflexions historiques*, 27 (2001), 301–24.

<sup>20</sup> De Thou, *Histoire*, xi, 160–1.

<sup>21</sup> Pigafetta, 'Relation', 50–1.

militiaman while he lets off his gun (Figure 1b.G). L’Estoile added the precision that a servant of the Spanish ambassador was the victim, which De Thou revised to a domestic of the papal legate. The victim wears a preened moustache and goatee, a tall hat, tight ruff and flowing pink silk gown, his face white as a sheet as he collapses theatrically to the surprise of the spectators around him and the ignorance of many of the processors (Figure 1b.H). De Thou added a further twist to this story. Because everybody present witnessed the accident and started to gossip about it, a counter rumour spread, one confirmed by the legate, that because the domestic had died in such a holy action, his soul rose directly to heaven.<sup>22</sup> This accident is crucial in dating the scene in this painting to 14 May 1590 and the composition of Figure 1 draws our attention to it. Many of the guns of the surrounding processors point towards the puff of smoke let off by the errant monk as he shot the secretary. Other figures in the procession might have caused similar controversy. A hooded Franciscan points his gun towards the papal legate (Figure 1b.I). A pale Carthusian has mis-matching socks and all of the colour of his face is drained by zealous exertions (Figure 1b.J). And a pair of portly Carthusians stop to converse with pious Parisian ladies but seem to be rebuffed by those ladies’ male guardian (Figure 1b.K). Throughout the crowd, the painting draws on such anticlerical sentiment to mock the Procession of the League as a whole.

The greatest difference between the contemporary textual accounts of 14 May 1590 is not in the details they recorded but in their judgements on the procession. Leaguer historians emphasised Parisians’ resolve during the siege in general, and included this particular procession in passing if at all. An anonymous manuscript history of the League, attributed to the ex-Leaguer and Oratorian Pierre Rozée, does not mention the procession and instead demonstrates the people’s resolve to fight for the League in a blow-by-blow account of the

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<sup>22</sup> De Thou, *Histoire*, xi, 160–1.

military history of the siege of Paris.<sup>23</sup> For royalists, however, Henri IV's victory made a mockery of the Leaguers' confidence under siege, and the accident during the 14 May procession made them laugh out loud. L'Estoile added a later note in the margin of his near contemporary report that royalists ridiculed the procession by circulating poems and he included a short quatrain in his manuscript.<sup>24</sup> In similar terms, De Thou concluded that the procession was 'a ridiculous ceremony' and that 'wise men cannot look up on it without indignation'.<sup>25</sup> His selection of details to record, including the rumour about the legate's domestic being taken up to heaven, became commonplace in subsequent histories of the League, notably by Henri Caterin Davila, François Eudes de Mézeray, and Louis Maimbourg. However the Leaguer Pigafetta and the royal historiographer Palma Cayet appear in their notes as authorities in place of De Thou, perhaps out of political correctness, following the papal condemnation of De Thou's works.<sup>26</sup>

All of these historical accounts of the procession of 14 May 1590 provide crucial details which identify the paintings of the Procession of the League as primarily based on this one event. In this extraordinary procession, the papal legate along with the armed clergy and religious orders marched to raise Parisians' morale and solidify popular support for the League. Yet to their dismay, and to peals of laughter from their royalist enemies, the accident that killed the legate's secretary made the event impossible to forget.

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<sup>23</sup> BnF ms. fr. 23296, fols. 235–42; M. Greengrass with M. Penzi and M. Critchlow, 'Unfinished Business: An Edition of the "Manuscript History of the League"', in *Social Relations, Politics, and Power in Early Modern France: Robert Descimon and the Historian's Craft*, (ed.) B. Diefendorf (Kirkville, forthcoming). See also *Journal d'un Ligueur Parisien, des barricades à la levée du siège de Paris par Henri IV (1588–1590)*, (ed.) X. Le Person, (Geneva, 1999), 175, 177–8; *Journal du siège de Paris en 1590 rédigé par un des assiégés*, (ed.) A. Franklin (Paris, 1876), 160–2; P. Cornejo, *Bref discours et véritable des choses plus notables, arrivées au siège memorable de la renommée ville de Paris, et défense d'icelle par Monseigneur le Duc de Nemours, contre le Roy de Navarre* (Lyon, 1590), 22–9, 47.

<sup>24</sup> P. de L'Estoile, *Journal du règne de Henri IV*, (ed.) X. Le Person (Geneva, 2011), i, 70–1; BnF ms. fr. 10299, fol. 30. See also the 'Sonnets sur la monstre des moines en armes par la ville de Paris, le lundi 14 de mai que les Politiques appelloient Mommerie' in BnF, ms. Dupuy 843, fols. 13r–4r.

<sup>25</sup> De Thou, *Histoire*, xi, 160–1.

<sup>26</sup> H. Caterin Davila, *Histoire des guerres civiles en France* (Amsterdam 1757, first Italian edition 1630), iii, 65–7; F. Eudes de Mézeray, *Histoire de France, tome troisième. Contenant le regne du roy Henry III et celui du roy Henry IIII jusqu'à la Paix de Vervin inclusivement* (Paris, 1651), 795–6; L. Maimbourg, *Histoire de la Ligue* (Paris, 1683), 416–7.

## II

The image of the Procession of the League became such an effective and enduring one in the memory of the Wars of Religion because it bundled together all of the events and characters crucial to royalist arguments about this period into one satirical motif. Henri IV marched triumphantly into Paris in March 1594 and thereafter worked to bring an end to the religious wars that might satisfy the majority of his Catholic subjects and placate the Protestant party, which he had seemingly abandoned when he converted to Catholicism in July 1593. By caricaturing the political ambitions of the League, mishandled by ignorant priests and monks marching to the tune of the papal legate, the pictures of the Procession of the League played a part in that process. Their imagery appealed to royalist Catholics as well as Protestants who used it to display allegiance to Henri IV and celebrate the defeat and exile of the Leaguers. To make this point the image had to be appropriated, reproduced, and disseminated to sympathetic audiences. This section and the following one analyse that process between the Edict of Nantes and its revocation.

Documents in Paris from the early seventeenth century record the transformation of the procession of the League from a major event in contemporary historical writing to the subject of commemorative history paintings. A note from L'Estoile's diaries is the earliest evidence that I have found concerning the paintings in this series. It connects the image to a royalist and Protestant milieu in the reign of Henri IV. At the Fair of Saint Germain on 6 February 1602, Maximilien de Béthune, marquis de Rosny, surintendant de finances and a supporter of Henri de Navarre over decades, went shopping for pictures. Perhaps he was looking for decorations for the château de Sully which he purchased that year after acquiring



his new title.<sup>27</sup> At the fair, he paid the considerable sum of twenty-five *écus* for a painting of ‘The Procession of the League’ done by Douet, the king’s painter, ‘in which Guillaume Rose, the bishop of Senlis, was painted as a colonel, represented in a life-like manner’.<sup>28</sup> This Douet might be the painter Jean de Hoey, born in Leiden but active in France in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, who along with Ambroise Dubois took a commission from Sebastien Zamet in 1603 to decorate a picture gallery in the royal palace of Fontainebleau which included battles from Navarre’s war with the League.<sup>29</sup> Alternatively it might be his son the painter Jacques Doet (also Douey, or de Hoey), who signed notarial contracts in Paris from 1607 at least as ‘maître peintre’ and ‘peintre du roi’.<sup>30</sup> With this purchase at the turn of the seventeenth-century by the duc de Sully, the procession of the League first graced the walls of a château by the Loire. Yet when it was sold by Sully’s descendent on 8 March 1762, described as being kept behind glass, this painting fetched fifteen *livres*, a modest price compared to other versions of the scene around this time, suggesting that it was rather small.<sup>31</sup> In 1602 the painting offered a novel depiction of a significant event in recent history, which by the mid eighteenth century was impossible to distinguish from the many later copies.

Two decades after Sully’s purchase, a painting of the Procession of the League appears in the post-mortem inventory of the Parisian Protestant and merchant Jacques Conrart (d.1624), father of the founding secretary of the Académie française, Valentin Conrart. An importer of fine fabrics from the Southern Netherlands which he sold primarily in Paris,

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<sup>27</sup> B. Barbiche, *Histoire de Sully-sur-Loire: le château, la ville, le terroir* (Roanne, 1986), 49.

<sup>28</sup> P. de L’Estoile, *Mémoires-journaux de Pierre de L’Estoile*, (ed.) P.-G. Brunet et al. (Paris, 1888–1896), viii, 14.

<sup>29</sup> Van der Linden, ‘Painting the Past’.

<sup>30</sup> *Documents du Minutier central des notaires de Paris: peintres, sculpteurs et graveurs au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle (1600–1650) Tome II*, (eds.) M.-A. Fleury and M. Constans (Paris, 2010), 316–7; A. Schnapper, *Curieux du grand siècle: collections et collectionneurs dans la France du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris, 1994), 288; *Documents du Minutier central concernant les peintres, les sculpteurs et les graveurs au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle (1600–1650)*, (ed.) M.-A. Fleury (Paris, 1969), 310.

<sup>31</sup> Information accessed via the Getty Provenance Index databases, J. Paul Getty Trust, <<http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/provenance/>>, accessed 29 August 2015.

Limoges, La Rochelle and Lyon, Jacques Conrart relied on a network of Protestant traders to further his business interests. Around the turn of the seventeenth century, once the Edict of Nantes had established peace in the French kingdom, Conrart arrived in Paris from Valenciennes as a Protestant but soon converted to Catholicism and swore allegiance to Henri IV. He married Péronne Targer, from a Parisian Protestant family of wealthy merchants who converted to Catholicism after the Saint Bartholomew's Day massacre. Despite these public conversions, Conrart's modest library clearly reveals his Protestant sympathies, consisting of a book of martyrs, Bullinger's sermons, *Le mistere d'iniquité* and a *Response* by Du Plessis Mornay and a Bible. Conrart displayed the Procession of the League in a small bedchamber overlooking the courtyard of his house on the rue Saint Martin. The painting appears somewhat cramped and neglected up there, done in oil on wood and priced at eight *livres* together with two paintings of the Virgin and Child and another Tower of Babel, one deemed inferior to the Tower of Babel displayed in the hall downstairs, painted in oil on copper and worth twenty-four *livres*. Elsewhere in the house Conrart displayed fifty-one pictures, fifteen depicting religious topics including saints and Old Testament scenes, seven mythological scenes, eight landscapes and twenty genre paintings, including 'thirteen round pictures painted in oil on wood decorated with a gilt border with Flemish written around them representing several drolleries'. His collection reveals a taste for Northern Renaissance art which complemented his large number of Flemish tapestries. It confirms the connection between royalism and the (abjured) Reformed faith, a taste for humorous 'drolleries' and curiosity for the Procession of the League.<sup>32</sup>

One of the Carnavalet paintings (Figure 2) demonstrates a clear Parisian identity, although at 100 x 212cm it is perhaps too large to be associated with the modestly valued

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<sup>32</sup> AN MC LXXXVI 217, 1 October 1624; N. Schapira, *Un Professionnel des lettres au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle: Valentin Conrart, une histoire sociale* (Seyssel, 2003), 30–39; G. Wildenstein, *Le Goût pour la peinture dans la bourgeoisie parisienne au début du règne de Louis XIII, d'après des inventaires après décès et des contrats de mariage conservés aux Archives nationales* (Paris, 1959), 45, 81.

pictures owned by Sully and Conrart. This version of the scene remains somewhat outside of the representational tradition, which typically follows Figure 1, for reasons explained in the next section. Figure 2 might be considered an early version of the image of the Procession of the League as it shows the Hôtel de Ville before its reconstruction was completed in 1607-9. Contemporary maps of Paris support this point as they represent the new Hôtel de Ville with a pavilion above the central entrance, a feature missing from earlier maps and this painting.<sup>33</sup> This version includes a singularly lively portrait of Rose and adds particularly recognisable details about the presence of the Guise family and the League aristocracy greeting him. Charles de Lorraine, duc de Mayenne, the brother of the assassinated duc and cardinal de Guise, doffs his hat to the procession (Figure 2b.A). Catherine de Lorraine, Madame de Montpensier and sister of the duc de Guise, carries her green scarf as the symbol of the League (Figure 2b.B). Catherine de Nevers, the widow of the duc de Guise, stands in pure white with their children, while a tavern owner surreptitiously wraps hands around her waist and whispers in her ear (Figure 2b.C). Beside them stands the papal legate in black, aged and wearing a wide-brimmed hat (Figure 2b.D). While contemporary accounts do not list these individuals as being present at the procession, by including them the artist contributes to his presentation of this scene as an ensemble of the characters of the League.

Figure 2 is particularly distinctive because it addresses the impact of the League on religious passions and the material conditions of Parisian life during the siege, which lasted from the aftermath of the battle of Ivry on 13 March 1590 until 30 August that year. Among its representations of the wild zeal of the Leaguers, a Franciscan with bulging eyes swivels

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<sup>33</sup> H. Ballon, *The Paris of Henri IV: Architecture and Urbanism* (New York, 1991), 10–1, 304 n.20. Compare the map by O. Tuchet and G. Hoyau (Basel, before 1559) and Vassalieu, dit Nicolay (Paris, 1609).

Figure 2b. Musée Carnavalet, Paris, P.262.



his gun around on its stand as he is hassled by a civic militiaman (Figure 2b.E).<sup>34</sup> Nearby, scuffles break out among ragged boys as charitable women distribute soup, and a League militiaman harasses a poor water-carrier as a well-dressed observer (perhaps the artist himself) draws our attention to the scene by gesturing towards them (Figure 2b.F). In the background-right, all that is left of the market place of the Place de Grève is two stalls left selling fish and meat (Figure 2b.G), while nearby young men chop up boats for firewood and others a scuffle over a lamb (Figure 2b.H). These ethnographic scenes evoke the misery of everyday life in Paris under siege in a way that both draws on and enriches the historical accounts of eyewitness observers such as L'Estoile. It remembers the religious passions of the civil wars as a foolish distraction from the underlying problem of political obedience to the monarchy. The League's rebellion had prolonged the civil wars and the people's material suffering, offering them spiritual nourishment alone when they still wanted for basic food and drink.

Overall this painting demonstrates how key features of the image of the Procession of the League became set in the years immediately following the events it depicted and how this image particularly resonated in Paris where these events took place. Taken together with the pictures owned by Sully and Conrart, these early Parisian representations demonstrate how the Procession of the League proclaimed strong connections to the Protestant movement as well as support for Henri IV, while permitting its owners to amuse themselves and their guests with another 'drollery' on the wall which commemorated recent events in the capital.

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<sup>34</sup> For the role of civic militia in keeping order in Parisian processions during the troubles of the League see *Registres des délibérations du bureau de la ville de Paris*, (ed.) F. Bonnardot (Paris, 1902), ix, 321, 325, 350, 590, 628, 631–2, x, 220, 229–30, 250, 293, 330, 374, 378, 410. On the militancy of Paris Franciscans see M. C. Armstrong, *The Politics of Piety: Franciscan Preachers During the Wars of Religion, 1560–1600* (Rochester, NY, 2004).



### III

Who might have painted these images, and when? In order to understand how images of the Procession of the League shaped the memory of the Wars of Religion it is crucial to attribute them as precisely as possible. Both L'Estoile's report of Sully's purchase and Conrart's inventory have been ignored by the museums and auction houses dealing with these paintings. Instead these institutions attribute the paintings to the more renowned royal painter François Bunel, who was born in 1552 and died in 1599, three years before L'Estoile mentioned Douet's version. The basis for this attribution seems to be the undated signature 'Bunel' on the reverse of a painting in a private collection. The earliest attribution to Bunel that I have encountered is in a December 1773 sale catalogue, a commercially motivated claim, although a modest one when rival sellers made a greater profit when they marketed their versions of the scene as a Brueghel or a Van Dyck.<sup>35</sup> Born in Tours, Bunel served as painter and *valet de chambre* at the court of Henri de Navarre in Pau between 1583 and 1590. Then he returned to Tours where he was paid for his role in the 1590 entry of Henri de Navarre to the city. The vast majority of his works have been lost. No known archival evidence links Bunel to these paintings. Circumstantial evidence seems to rule him out as he stopped work over a decade before the first mention of these paintings. Jacob Bunel (1558-1614) was more renowned than his brother and lodged in the Louvre from 1602. He was at least active as a court painter at the time of Sully's purchase of Douet's picture, but he concentrated on more spectacular themes in the royal picture galleries, and again there is no archival evidence linking him to the Procession of the League.<sup>36</sup> These findings suggest that

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<sup>35</sup> Sold in Paris as for 151 *livres* on 9 June 1752 by Nicolas Bourbet de Vaux and attributed to Van Dyck, sold in Paris for 90 *livres* on 4 April 1791 and attributed by the sales catalogue to Jan Brueghel the Elder, and sold in Paris 13–20 December 1773 and attributed to Bunel. Information accessed via the Getty Provenance Index databases, J. Paul Getty Trust, <<http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/provenance/>>, accessed 29 August 2015.

<sup>36</sup> On the Bunel brothers see *Peintres, sculpteurs et graveurs au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle II*, 144–6; S. Béguin, 'Pour Jacob Bunel' in Claude Mignot and Paola Pacht Bassani with Sylvain Kespern (eds.) *Claude Vignon en son temps*:

this widespread attribution of images of the Procession of the League to Bunel is incorrect, driven by the desire of modern collectors to link their work to a royal painter active, if only just, at the time these events happened. Owning a Bunel brings upon the collector the allure of the glory days of Henri IV. Yet a precise attribution of the surviving paintings to particular artists is impossible because of the many appropriations of motifs between the surviving examples. This ambiguous provenance chain might cause intractable problems for curators and collectors, but it offers an opportunity for historians to trace a topic of collective memory in the making.

The key to the appropriation and circulation of images of the procession of the League hangs not in the picture galleries of the Louvre but among the somewhat less illustrious engravings used as a source. If Sully bought his painting in 1602, the first documented image in this series, almost all of the later paintings can be traced back to an engraving produced a few years later, perhaps based on this painting, or even a picture derived from it. One version of the painting in the Carnavalet makes the significance of the engravings clear. The upper and lower parts of the painting shown in Figure 1 derive from two separate series of prints. The first series provides the source for the banner along the bottom, depicted in a large format fold-out print in the collection of the Bibliothèque nationale de France (Figure 3). It includes a French text and a detailed engraving, published in Amsterdam in 1610 by the Protestant map-maker Pieter van der Keere.<sup>37</sup> Adapting the scene to consolidate its anti-League stereotype, like De Thou's historical account, Van der Keere's engraving lists the religious orders involved and adds two Jesuits among those mentioned in the textual sources,

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*actes du colloque international de l'université de Tours (28–29 janvier 1994)* (Paris, 1998), 83–96; J. Pérot, 'L'iconographie d'Henri de Navarre à l'époque de la bataille de Coutras et au début de son règne en France: le rôle de François Bunel' in *Quatrième centenaire de la bataille de Coutras* (Pau, 1989), 175–201, which gives a possible attribution of a royal portrait to Bunel in 1592–3; I. Ardouin-Weiss, *Les familles du peintre Jacob Bunel et de sa femme Marguerite Bahuche* (Tours, 1984); P. Lafond, *François et Jacob Bunel, peintres de Henri IV* in *Réunion des sociétés des beaux-arts des départements*, 22 (1898).

<sup>37</sup> J. E. E. Boys, *London's News Press and the Thirty Years War* (Woodbridge, 2011), 65–6, 68–9; R.A. Skelton, 'Pieter van den Keere', *The Library*, 5 (1950), 130–2.

who also appear in the lower banderolle of the painting in Figure 1 (Figure 1b.L). Van der Keere's engraving appeared with a patriotic text celebrating Henri IV's Gallican resistance to the ultramontaine League at a moment when the Twelve Years Truce did not disguise continued enmity between the Dutch and Spanish in matters of politics and religion, and when political elites in Dutch Republic divided between the pro-war Statdholder Maurice of Nassau and his opponents among the regents. A Latin poem underneath the engraving roused bellicose sentiments when it asked 'How is it that France, a renowned country, could remain bewitched for so long! Did all these monks become soldiers, armed by the vainglorious Spaniard?' The French text below then answered the question with a narrative of the troubles of the League. It concluded with the victory of Henri IV, 'a king truly worthy of his crown, whom God the all mighty will protect and assure in good fortune and prosperity'. This broadsheet characterises the League as yet another example of the spread of Spanish fanaticism across Europe and celebrates Henri IV's victory, perhaps hoping for a repeat performance in the Netherlands.

Figure 3. *La procession de la Ligue* (Amsterdam: Pierre du Keere, 1610). B[ibliothèque] n[ationale] [de] F[rance], QB1 fol. Histoire de France, 1589-90, M 088101.





Figure 4. *La procession de la Ligue* also catalogued as *De optocht der gewapende monniken tijdens het beleg van Parijs in 1593*, signed Pieter van der Keere and Cornelis Danckerts (Amsterdam?, 1610?). BnF, QB-201 (11).





The other printed source for the main body of the Carnavalet painting is a variant of an engraving produced by the same Amsterdam publisher Pieter van der Keere along with his collaborator Cornelis Danckerts (Figure 4), an image that the main section of the Carnavalet painting in Figure 1 follows directly. A crucial change in detail is the shift from the pious Marian banner in the banderole and Figure 3—as in contemporary textual reports<sup>38</sup>—to the crusading banner of Saint Michael carried in the larger engraving, copied in all of the subsequent versions. Van der Keere’s engraving was widely reproduced in the early decades of the seventeenth century in paintings and further engravings which vary in technique and quality more than detail. It is the basis for the painting of the Procession of the League owned by museums in Bourges, Paris, Pau, Rouen, and Valenciennes, and Versailles as well as several now held in private collections which were photographed and documented by the Musée Carnavalet as they appeared for sale at auctions in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Figures 5-8).<sup>39</sup> These images continued to be traded in the eighteenth century, when at least eight sales in Paris were recorded in sales catalogues concerning individuals throughout the social hierarchy, from print dealers and widows of royal office-holders to the great collector Louis-François de Bourbon Conti.<sup>40</sup> Despite the optimistic attributions to Van Dyck, Brueghel and Bunel, most of these sales were listed without an artist, and one was described as being done ‘after the engravings’.<sup>41</sup> In the nineteenth century, emerging public museums competed with collectors to acquire versions of the Procession of the League, when Louis Philippe, king of the French, acquired the painting in Figure 7 in 1833 for his museum

<sup>38</sup> L’Estoile, *Journal pour le règne d’Henri IV*, i, 70; Pigafetta, ‘Relation’, 51.

<sup>39</sup> Musée Carnavalet, Paris, Cabinet graphique, dossiers P.262, P.622, P.2538; J.-P. Willems, ‘Essai d’iconographie de la Procession de la Ligue’, *Étude de la Revue du Louvre: la donation Suzanne et Henri Baderou au musée de Rouen* (Paris, 1980), 15–7.

<sup>40</sup> F. Bussmann, *Un Prince collectionneur: Louis-François de Bourbon Conti et ses collections au palais du Temple à Paris* (Paris, 2012).

<sup>41</sup> Information accessed via the Getty Provenance Index databases, J. Paul Getty Trust, <<http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/provenance/>>, accessed 29 August 2015.

Figure 5. Musée des beaux-arts, Rouen, Inv.975-4-6, oil on canvas, 93 x 158cm. Bridgeman Education.



Figure 6. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Valenciennes, P46-1-506, oil on wood, 42 x 55cm. Bridgeman Education.





Figure 7. Musée de l'histoire de France, Château de Versailles, MV 3281, oil on canvas, 60 x 95cm.





Figure 8. Musée national du château de Pau, oil on canvas, 55 x 98cm.





of national history in Versailles.<sup>42</sup> By the time the Carnavalet began to acquire these pictures in the late nineteenth century they were well established as historical documents of their times. These private collectors and state museums appraised images of the Procession of the League among the plethora of relics of the Old Regime circulating in the decades following the revolution.<sup>43</sup>

Reproductions of this scene support one another in confirming the royalist idea that the procession of the League marked a crucial turning point in the Wars of Religion worth mocking and commemorating. They responded to a consumer demand both in their printed and painted versions which persisted throughout the seventeenth century. Engravings of the Procession of the League circulated most prominently in editions of the erudite, royalist polemic, the *Satyre Ménippée de la vertu du Catholicon d’Espagne et de la tenue des Etats de Paris* (Paris, 1594), a miscellany of poems and mock speeches by members of the Estates General of the League in 1593, composed by a group of erudite magistrates, scholars, and poets from the royalist party. The *Satyre* opens with a procession through the streets of Paris leading to the inaugural meeting of the Estates, a passage which ‘telescopes’ the two processions, placing caricatures of those who were present at the 14 May 1590 procession into a satirical account of the procession for the opening of the Estates General in 1593. Confirming this link, from 1632 editions of the *Satyre* included an engraving of the Procession of the League derived from Van der Keere’s version which guaranteed its reception in repeated editions over the following decades.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Musée de l’Histoire de France, Château de Versailles, dossier M.V.3281; *The Gentleman’s Magazine*, 20 (1843), 576–80. From a misreading of the imprecise banner, copied from the Van der Keere engraving, this reviewer dated the painting to 1595 and considered it a commission from Guillaume Rose himself.

<sup>43</sup> T. Stammers, ‘The Bric-a-Brac of the Old Regime: Collecting and Cultural History in Post-Revolutionary France’, *French History*, 22 (2008), 295–315.

<sup>44</sup> Editions listed in *Satyre menippe de la vertu du catholicon d’Espagne*, (ed.) M. Martin (Paris, 2007), CLII–CLXXIII, and see 16–8 for this passage, and 202 n.88 for its ‘téléscopage’ of the events of 14 May 1590. See also J.H.M. Salmon, ‘French Satire in the Late Sixteenth Century’ in J.H.M. Salmon, *Renaissance and Revolt: Essays in the Intellectual and Social History of Early Modern France* (Cambridge, 1987), 86.

Because of this association with the *Satyre*, which became much better known than the obscure passages of De Thou and other historians relating to the events of 14 May 1590, engravings of the Procession of the League from the mid-seventeenth century often carried the date 1593, pieces which eventually became a source for dealers and curators dating pictures in this series.<sup>45</sup> These connections with the *Satyre* went beyond identification to intertextual appropriation. One painting in a private collection copies the scene in the Van der Keere engraving and includes beneath it verses derived from the chapter of the *Satyre* which describes the procession opening the Estates of the League. This intertextual connection led the painting's former owner to claim optimistically that his painting was *the* original in the series. Instead, this painting serves as further evidence of the creative appropriation of the motif of the Procession of the League both in textual and visual media, in this case as it relates to the defining royalist literary representation of the League in the *Satyre*. The article demonstrates directly how collectors in the early twentieth century could still hope for their treasures to gain in prestige and value by associating their version of the painting as closely as possible with the reign of Henri IV.<sup>46</sup>

Seventeenth-century Protestant literary as well as visual productions displayed the Procession of the League in order to mock this moment in recent history and the fashion for commemorating it. Agrippa d'Aubigné's comic novel *Les aventures du Baron de Fæneste*, published in 1617, stages a meeting between the Protestant seigneur de Beaujeu, the eponymous Catholic baron de Fæneste (the Greek term for Appearance, or *paroistre*) and his companion Enay (Being, or *estre*), when they discuss the fashion to possess a copy of the painting known as the Procession of the League. Beaujeau introduces the topic by reassuring his interlocutors that 'You have seen these paintings in all the great houses ... Everything is

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<sup>45</sup> Multiple copies in BnF Qb1, 1589–90.

<sup>46</sup> E. Révillout, 'Le Tableau de la Ligue dans ses rapports avec la Satyre Menippée', *Bulletin de la Montagne Sainte Geneviève*, 6 (1909–1912), 117–51. For a photograph of this painting see Musée Carnavalet, Paris, Cabinet graphique, dossier P.622.

comic, apart from a monk, who, turning his head and shooting, kills one of the spectators'. Quick to follow the latest trends, Faeneste replies in his most courteous Gascon 'I ask you, Monsieur, to acquire for me a copy of these paintings, which I want to send to my mother to decorate the gallery, if only for appearance's sake'.<sup>47</sup> Aubigné used the chaotic details of the paintings to enliven this dialogue in a way that confirms Faeneste's vanity and ignorance. His desire to follow fashion leads him to miss the point of the painting and mocks his blind Catholic faith, itself an impious expression of *parestre* rather than *estre*.

This section has emphasised how the regular reproduction of texts and images of this scene were mutually reinforcing, particularly as they followed Van der Keere's primary image. However they converge only in a loose manner as individual artists produced their own versions for curious buyers. These pictures did not all derive from one painter and his studio, as the recurrent and frankly rather flattering attribution to François Bunel suggests. The reproductions displayed in the Figures, as well as the diverse reception history traced in this section, demonstrate that these pictures were painted by different artists and with slightly varying sources, above all the printed engravings. What mattered most was the dominant royalist interpretation of the troubles of the League which appealed to the consumers of these images. As the inscription to one painting in the series put it, quoting from Lucretius to summarise the significance of the series as a whole, 'tantum religio potuit suadere malorum', 'the practice of religion leads people to commit evil deeds'.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> A. d'Aubigné, *Œuvres*, (ed.) Henri Weber (Paris, 1969), 809. 'Que m'amuserai-je à vous conter? Vous l'avez veuë en peinture aux bonnes maisons. La plupart portoit la mesche d'une main, et tenoit le mousquet de l'autre; plusieurs estolles servirent de porte-espees et de bauldriers, et c'est de cette monstre qu'a pris son origine la façon de porter l'espee le poureau dans la breguette. Vous y voyez un Moine qui se creve un œil de l'hallebarde de celui qui va devant. Je pris plaisir à voir un Carme réformé qui portoit son fournement dans le derriere du froc. Tout y est comique, horsmis qu'un Moine qui tournoit la teste en tirant, tuë un des spectateurs ... Je bous prie, Monsur, m'accourder une copie de ces peintures; ye les emboyrai à ma meire, qui en accommodera la gallerie de Faeneste, sulement pour fadeiya. Au pis aller, quauques milliers de pistolles en feront raison.'

<sup>48</sup> Private collection, sold at Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 1998, sold at Maison de Cornette de Saint Cyr, 14 June 2004, after François II Bunel, oil on canvas, 128 x 188 cm.

#### IV

The image of the Procession of the League took on renewed significance around the time of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, when Protestants appropriated the image of the Procession to mock Louis XIV's regime for resurrecting the conflicts of the Wars of Religion a century on. Direct evidence for this about-turn comes in the sequence of *Les Héros de la Ligue ou la procession monacale, conduite par Louis XIV, pour la conversion des protestants de son royaume*, apparently published in Paris in 1691, but rather produced in the Netherlands and championing 'Our Orange' in his war against the Sun King.<sup>49</sup> These grotesque caricatures identify members of Louis XIV's court and royal council with figures in the procession of the League, so that the king's confessor François de La Chaise, Louvois the minister responsible for the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the king's second wife the devout Madame de Maintenon and many more figures from the clergy and royal government zealously process against the Huguenots. Leading this printed procession is the Sun King himself, using the habit of a penitent to disguise his 'Politique' ambitions. This publication forms part of a concerted campaign of Protestant anticlerical satire published in the Netherlands around the time of the Revocation, notably represented by *Renversement de la morale chrétienne par les désordres du monachisme* (1676, reprinted 1689 and subsequently). Its grotesque caricatures of monks representing immoral traits directly inform the caricatures in *Les héros de la Ligue* and have been attributed to the Haarlem artists Cornelis Dusart and Romeyn de Hooghe.<sup>50</sup> The accounts circulated widely in Protestant Europe and formed part of a new phase in debates concerning the memory of the Wars of

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<sup>49</sup> 'Sonnet. Responce des refugiez aux persecuteurs' which concludes *Les Héros de la Ligue*.

<sup>50</sup> On Dusart see S. Anderson, 'The Library of Cornelis Dusart: Between Artist and Gentleman', *Oud Holland*, 123 (2010), 133–165. On De Hooghe see David van der Linden, *Experiencing Exile: Huguenot Refugees in the Dutch Republic, 1680–1700* (Farnham, 2015), 225–6.

Religion, one marked by a greater sense of urgency and shared purpose among the Huguenots following their exile.<sup>51</sup>

These anticlerical caricatures help to interpret a remarkable pair of images which remain tucked away in Parisian store-rooms, a gouache conserved in the Musée Carnavalet (Figure 9) and its preparatory drawing kept in the BnF (Figure 10). Conservators have recently dated these images to the final third of the seventeenth century because of the florid style and the fontange worn by the women in their hair.<sup>52</sup> The drawing and gouache depict a slightly different Procession of the League, the procession in Paris in early August 1589 celebrating the regicide Jacques Clement, who was immediately killed by royal guards after he had fatally wounded Henri III. This procession takes place before the cathedral of Notre Dame but in a larger space than the earlier paintings and engravings which cram the scene into the narrow streets of the Île de la Cité. Clement's effigy is at the centre of the procession which inaugurates him as a martyr for the cause.

While previous versions of the Procession of the League were satirical, this gouache is grossly anticlerical. Conservators in the BnF have suggested that it might be a Protestant production, perhaps in exile following the Revocation, but no conclusive documentary evidence exists.<sup>53</sup> Anticlericalism can be a driving force both within and against the Catholic Church, especially as part of the Gallican tradition.<sup>54</sup> Comparison between Figures 9 and 10 demonstrates this interpretation. Figure 7 includes notes in the margins from the patron on how to prepare the final version of the image, suggestions which the gouache incorporates. In the foreground-left, where the drawing depicts boozing, dozy, and skirt-chasing friars, the

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<sup>51</sup> Van der Linden, *Experiencing Exile*, 163–223.

<sup>52</sup> 'Parodie d'une procession à Paris en faveur de la canonisation de Jacques Clément' in B. Brejon de Lavergnée with D. Chantrenne, P. Cugy and M. Préaud (eds.), *Dessins français du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle: inventaire de la collection de la Réserve du département de Estampes et de la Photographie (cotes B6, B7, B11, B14)* (Paris, 2014), 299–300.

<sup>53</sup> 'Parodie d'une procession' suggests as an attribution Bernard Picart, a Huguenot who went into exile in the Netherlands.

<sup>54</sup> T. Wanegffelen (ed.), *L'Humaniste, le protestant et le clerc: de l'anticléricalisme croyant au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, a special issue of *Siècles: Cahiers du Centre d'Histoire Espaces et Cultures* 18 (2004).



Figure 9. Musée Carnavalet, Paris, gouache on vellum, 40 x 65.4cm.





Figure 10. BnF Estampes, pierre noire, pen and ink drawing, 47.3 x 70.5cm.



annotation pleads to the artist that ‘you must include two fat monks doing their business and another who pisses’. In the gouache, the artist has followed the instructions precisely, with a Dominican on the far left hitching up his cassock to piss, and nearby a Fransiscan and Dominican baring their arses to ‘do their business’. This is one of ten passages suggesting one or more corrections and additions.<sup>55</sup> This version of the Procession of the League significantly increases the violence of the image. Whereas once it was directed by the royalist supporters of Henri IV against his ultramontaine enemies, almost a century later the Protestants who felt abandoned by Henri IV and his Edict of Nantes responded to its revocation by appropriating the image of the Procession of the League and turning it against Louis XIV.

## V

These final images demonstrate how this particular historical memory became a satirical motif to be appropriated and adapted in certain circumstances for particular audiences. It was not simply a topic lodged in popular historical consciousness, a pre-modern *milieu de mémoire*, but a polemical weapon that could be targeted in different directions. And it was an especially effective weapon because of the way it used humour. These images delegitimised the participants in the procession by mocking their false piety in order to condemn their political aims. They demonstrate how humour acted as a compelling way to engage early modern audiences, particularly when it followed popular patterns or motifs that endured over

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<sup>55</sup> Transcribed in ‘Parodie d’une procession’.

decades and across genres, in this instance the anticlerical motifs that recall Reformation broadsheets and Pieter Brueghel the Elder's 'Battle between Carnival and Lent' (1559).<sup>56</sup> Moreover, these images demonstrate that the memory of the Wars of Religion was a politically dangerous subject in the century that followed the Edict of Nantes which was appropriated by a fragile alliance of multiple actors interested in proclaiming their royalist credentials. This article has shown how one satirical motif helped to demonstrate support for the monarchy, driven by consumer demand which was supported but not determined from above by royal efforts to consolidate the rule of the Bourbon dynasty and Dutch antipathy for the Spanish Habsburgs. Figures 9-10 further demonstrate how that motif ultimately failed to conceal the changing nature of confessional relations throughout the seventeenth century, such that Protestants used it against royalist Catholics following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. By this time, the Bourbon monarch had ceased to be the hero who triumphed over the ridiculous Leaguers, and instead the Sun King in the caricatures of *Les héros de la Ligue* became a tyrant hiding his political ambition under the habit of a penitent.

#### Appendix: Images of the Procession of the League

##### *Paintings with museum and auction attributions*

Musée Carnavalet, Paris, P.262, French school (François II Bunel?), oil on canvas, 100 x 212cm, acquired 1899, once part of the collection of the duc de Talleyrand et de Valençay, Place de Grève.

Musée Carnavalet, Paris, P.622, studio of François II Bunel, oil on canvas, 154 x 267cm, acquired 1895, Île de la Cité no inscription plus banderolle.

Musée Carnavalet, Paris, P.872, Joos van Winghe, oil on canvas, 52 x 62cm, acquired 1890 from the collection Baur, unspecified location.

Musée Carnavalet, Paris, P.2538, French school, oil on canvas, 38.5 x 74.3cm, bequest in 1995 from the collection of Alexis Neyraud, Île de la Cité no inscription.

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<sup>56</sup> P. Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* [1978] (London, 2009), 289; R. Scribner, *For the Sake of the Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation* (Oxford, 1994). On the polemical use of humour in the French Reformation see Denis Crouzet, *Dieu en ses royaumes: Une histoire des guerres de Religion* (Paris, 2008), 186-193.

- Musée des Beaux-Arts, Bourges, François II Bunel, oil on wood, acquired 1836 from the collection of M. Labouvie, Île de la Cité no inscription.
- Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rouen, Inv.975-4-6, entourage of François II Bunel, oil on canvas, 93 x 158cm, acquired 1975 from the collection Baderou, sold in Paris 1962, Île de la Cité no inscription.
- Musée des Beaux-Arts, Valenciennes, P46-1-506, after François II Bunel, oil on wood, 42 x 55cm, acquired from the legacy of Bénézech de Saint-Honoré, 1852, Île de la Cité with Notre Dame no inscription.
- Musée de l'histoire de France, Château de Versailles, MV 3281, after François II Bunel, oil on canvas, 60 x 95cm, acquired in 1833 by king Louis-Philippe, Île de la Cité with clumsy Latin inscription that over-runs the allocated space and continues below the banner.
- Musée national du château de Pau, François II Bunel, oil on canvas, 55 x 98cm, acquired in London 2012, Île de la Cité no inscription.
- Private collection, sold at the Hôtel Drouot, Paris 27 March 1944 and again 4 May 1953, sold at Versailles 7 November 1971, at the Hôtel Drouot, Paris 30 November 1990, oil on canvas, 127 x 182cm, from the collection Revillout, Île de la Cité with Latin inscription and verses from the *Satyre ménippée*.
- Private collection, sold at Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 1998, sold at Maison de Cornette de Saint Cyr, 14 June 2004, after François II Bunel, oil on canvas, 128 x 188 cm, Île de la Cité with the inscription 'Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum'.
- Private collection, circle of Denis van Alsloot, oil on wood, 51 x 72cm sold Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 14 December 1998, from the collection of the château de Villebon, Île de la Cité with Notre Dame no inscription.
- Private collection, studio of François II Bunel, oil on wood, 48 x 63cm, sold at Sotheby's Amsterdam in 1995, from the collection of Serge Philipson, Dublin, Île de la Cité with Notre Dame no inscription.
- Private collection, entourage of François II Bunel, 21.5 x 30cm, sold 16 October 1991 Hôtel Drouot, Paris, from the collection Jean Schmit, Île de la Cité with Notre Dame.
- Private collection, the heirs of Tobias Christ, Basel. I have been unable to see this version. It is not included in the Tobias Christ bequest to the Basel Kunstmuseum or in the catalogue of *Highly Important Old Master Drawings from the Collection of Tobias Christ of Basel: Auction London, Sotheby Parke Bernet, 9th April 1981* (London, 1981).

#### *Other formats*

- BnF, pierre noire, pen and ink drawing, 47.3 x 70.5cm, from the collection of Charles-Marie Fevret de Fontette, Île de la Cité and Notre Dame.
- BnF, Series Qb1, 1589-90, and Collection Hennin, vols. 10, 11, 1589-1596, prints in various formats of the Procession of the League dating up to the nineteenth century.
- La procession de la Ligue* (Amsterdam: Pierre du Keere, 1610), banderolle with Dutch text to identify participants and French commentary, BnF QB1 fol. Histoire de France, 1589-90, M 088101.



*La procession de la Ligue* also catalogued as *De optocht der gewapende monniken tijdens het beleg van Parijs in 1593*, signed Pieter van der Keere and Cornelis Danckerts (Amsterdam?, 1610?), BnF, QB-201 (11), Île de la Cité with Latin inscription and verses.

*Les héros de la Ligue ou la procession monacale, conduite par Louis XIV, pour la conversion des protestants de son royaume* ('Paris', 1691).

Musée Carnavalet, Paris, gouache on vellum, 40 x 65.4cm, acquired in 1889 from the collection Baur, Île de la Cité and Notre Dame.

*Satyre ménippée de la Vertu du Catholicon d'Espagne et de la tenue des Estatz de Paris* [Paris, 1594], several editions from 1632 include an engraving of the Procession of the League derived from Pieter van der Keere's engraving.